

HANDBOOK SURVEY YIELDS RESULTS

- PERSI to implement print and distribution efficiencies -

PERSI recently emailed employers asking them to complete a survey pertaining to the member handbook and ways to get benefit information to members. PERSI got a 15 percent response rate, and anyone familiar with surveys knows that's a phenomenal number. (Many survey experts say a 2 percent response rate is considered good.) Our thanks to everyone who returned a survey, and especially to those who took the time to return comments and suggestions. Each response was read, the responses tabulated, and a report generated. Employer input provided the foundation for recommendations made to the Board on July 25th on how we should proceed.

Implementing Efficiencies

Based on employer responses, and with the concurrence of the Retirement Board, PERSI will:

- (1) Print a *Benefits at a Glance* flyer and mail it to active members with the 3rd Quarter *PERSpectives* newsletter (end of September).
- (2) Print a limited number of handbooks and mail them to new members, and make copies available to other members upon request. As a result, PERSI will no longer distribute handbooks to employers for orientation.
- (3) Notify employers via email when changes are made to the handbook on the PERSI Web site.

Why Do A Survey?

PERSI has always printed its publications for distribution and made them available online as well. This year, PERSI has been evaluating alternatives to mass producing a hard copy of the member handbook. We are trying to create efficient distribution alternatives that allow for periodic updates and improve the overall availability and accessibility of PERSI information to our members. Since hard vs. soft (electronic) copy publishing had already been discussed and researched by PERSI management, the next

logical step was to get employer feedback to confirm or refute our initial findings.

Benefits Flyer...Would it be OK?

When employers were asked how they would feel about their employees receiving a *Benefits at a Glance* flyer instead of a handbook, almost 70 percent said it would be OK. Many employers said they routinely direct their employees to the PERSI Web site for detailed and current information, and indicated it would be acceptable for them to tell their employees handbooks would be available from PERSI upon request.

The Best Way to Reach New Members

When asked about the best way for PERSI to get benefit information to new members, employers overwhelmingly ranked mail as the best method, via the employers was second, online was third, and through the workshops was last.

Web-Based Materials vs. Hard Copy Handouts

Nearly 50 percent of employers felt it was best to direct employees to the PERSI Web site so they would get the most current benefit information; however, 40 percent felt it was better for employees to receive a hard copy handout.

Employers Want to be Notified of Changes

Ninety-nine percent of employers said they wanted an email notification anytime the online member handbook is changed.

Using Workshops to Educate Members

More than 50 percent of employers felt it would be better for PERSI to conduct a workshop to explain benefits than it would be for the employer to give out handbooks at orientation

PERSI's goal in making these changes is to continue being fiscally responsible, without sacrificing customer service...thanks for helping us out!

COMING OF AGE IN IDAHO

- Summit on aging to be held in Boise -

Next month, the Idaho Agency on Aging will be hosting the 2006 Governor's Summit on Aging at the Boise Centre on the Grove. The program will focus on a number of areas critical to Idaho's aging population. On September 12 and 13, a cross-section of Idahoans will gather to raise awareness concerning the unique issues, challenges, and opportunities facing the nearly 300,000 Idahoans age 55 and above.

The goal of the summit is to share the "big picture" by presenting the demographics of what an aging population will look like in terms of economic, financial, workplace, and societal issues. Within these four areas, the following impacts will be explored:

- Economic: health care costs, transportation issues, impact on community resources, and senior markets consumerism.
- Financial: financial literacy, long-term care planning, retirement planning, investment fraud and exploitation, income security, and returning to work.
- Workplace: intergenerational differences, career retooling, workplace flexibility, the challenges of planning for an aging workforce, succession planning, phased retirement, and the post retirement jobs labor market.
- Societal: lifelong learning, recreation and

leisure, changing family dynamics, myths about aging, volunteerism, and community and civic involvement.

"The social and economic implications of an aging population – and of the baby boom in particular – are likely to be profound for both individuals and society."

*Louis Kincannon
Census Bureau Director*

More than 40 sessions and panel discussions will be available to attendees. Individuals attending will understand what to expect as they age, and will learn ways to plan for their future. Business people attending will increase their awareness of how the aging workforce may affect their operations, and will gain knowledge on ways to plan for changes. Government leaders attending will gain insight on how public policy may need to change to accommodate an older population.

Registration information can be found online at www.idahoaging.com. The cost before August 17 is \$95, after which it jumps to \$110. Registration includes a 2-day parking pass, full access to all sessions and exhibits, lunch each day, and morning and afternoon breaks. Sessions will begin at 8:00 a.m. and end by 4:30 p.m. Questions about the summit should be directed to Bettina Briscoe at (208) 334-3833 or via email at bbriscoe@aging.idaho.gov.

Notes

PERSI legal counsel [Brad Goodsell](#) made a presentation on significant state and local legislative developments affecting public retirement plans throughout the country at the Annual Education Conference of the National Association of Public Pension Attorneys (NAPPA) in New York City.

Coeur d'Alene customer service representative [Kathi Kaufman](#) joined Toastmasters to improve her public speaking skills.

A number of PERSI staff were screened for the National Bone Marrow Donor Program. During a recent blood drive sponsored by the American Red Cross, the Mountain States Tumor Institute was on hand to conduct health screenings and collect saliva samples for tissue matching. Bone marrow transplants give patients with leukemia and other life-threatening blood diseases a second chance at life. To learn more about bone marrow transplants, visit www.marrows.org on the Web.